JW,LF

8/26/72

Mr. Richard E. Gerstein
State's Attorney
Miami, Fla.

Dear Mr. Gerstein,

You may not recall me and my writing from earlier correspondence. You were then helpful. This letter is prompted by the limited reporting I have seen of your interest in what has come to be called The Watergate Caper, said to be centered around a possible charge of felony against Bernard Barker. I write on the chance I may be in a position to help you. Not knowing the extent of your interest, which is not reported other than above and which really is not properly my business, I don't know.

I have seen an earlier Miami newspaper clipping and it leaves a mystery about Hunt what is not at all mysterious and might be within the scope of your inquiry. It has to do with part of his second life when he was with CIA. Barker is part of his CIA life, at least, if not of one or more other careers. The reporter who wrote that story was not a very good investigator. He consulted 1972 sources for 1965 events, and if he'd known more, as he should have, he'd have known that the 1965 part of Hunt's second left lasted for perhaps four more years and involved others. I refer to what you may have seen, Hunt's connection with what your paper called the firm of Littauer and Wilkinson.

By the most remarkable of coincidences, his connection with that firm of literary agents, for that is what it was, closely coincided with my being sent there by The Saturday Evening Post, then preparing a deal for use of parts of my first book. That book said of part of Oswald's career that it was consistent with intelligence only. CIA Hunt's interest in this one angle ought require no exposition. In a relatively short time this deal was killed, for reasons then obviously and soon enough proven false, when that chapter was reprinted in another magazine with no literary-agency middleman. When the Post had the original interest and preferred the norm, handling the deal through an agent, does it not seem a little unusual that a seemingly set deal was killed by the agency with which Hunt claims an affiliation then and extending through his 1969 Who's Who listing? He is not, by the way, on their 1965 letterhead, nor is the alleged Washington office he also claims as his. There are other parts of his Washington career not reported where my information is solid beyond question and for the moment at least must be confidential. However, some of the reporting of it is false, not the fault of the reporters, for they reported what they were told. If they had investigated what they were told, they would have learned the truth. Of course, I do not know whether or how this can interest you.

In most areas you and your staff should know more about Miami Cubans that I. There may be a few exceptions. In turn, this might revolve around the thoroughness of FBI cooperation with you, a matter on which I do have an opinion. I do have some entirely inadequate FBI reports on Fiorini and Suarez, where less than was known to the bureau was included. These relate to threats against President Kennedy. I have a rather large file of FBI reports on other Cubans some of whom may, ultimately, figure in some aspects of this case as it unfolds. One is, I believe, a former Dade County Republican chairman or functionary, Fernando Penabaz, an extremist of the far-right. I also have other materials on him and his extremist connections. He ran the FBI ragged with one manufacture after another in both Kennedy assassinations.

I do not see the Miami papers, so what may have been reported there and thus known to you may not have been reported in the papers I do see. I do not believe that the real aliases of Bay of Pigs times of Hunt and Barker were Eduardo and Macho. I believe these men were really "Frank Bender" and "Bernie". I am aware that seemingly dependable sources identify Bender as a German refugee. However, there was also a "Frank" in the Bay of Pigs training hierarchy other than "Bender" and I believe confusion may have been possible. If you will look at the index to the definitive work on the Bay of Pigs, prepared ~~by~~ with the active collaboration of participants, you will find no Eduardo and the only Macho a priest whose real name that was. Having discovered this, I wondered at the immediate leaking of seemingly inaccurate identifications. If Hunt and Barker were the two top CIA men of the Bay of Pigs, is there not a somewhat different perspective now? And newspapers here report Hunt visit's to Miami prior to the arrests at the Watergate.

Successful efforts at obfuscation were made immediately in Washington, to the end that the possibilities other than bugging and the real nature of the equipment seized and its possible uses were never reported. One example is allegedly outdated electronic equipment. The transceivers, of which I believe two were captured with the men, were estimated to be worth $1,600 each. Aside from why licensed equipment on Republican-assigned frequencies was there or even needed in a simple bugging job, I think this indicates neither professional incompetence in that area nor inadequate equipment.

If it is unknown to you, there was in the 1968 election a Cuban-Americans for Nixon-Agnew. Members were officially honored after the election. I have copies of the news accounts and know something about these wierd men. They range, those mentioned, from nuts and Batista boys to overtfascists and racists. If I had the time and money to spare, I'd have looked at the 1968 campaign returns on these people. They are public records.

The public relations firm by which Hunt was employed, supposedly only an employee easily and promptly fired but actually, unless he lied, of which he was vice president and a director, admits this much CIA connection: Radio Free Cuba. That was part of Mariadne Arensberg's Free Cuba Committee. I believe the funding in one year was $500,000. This is the Robert R. Mullen agency. I have a tip I have not checked, that Mullen is a Key Biscayne neighbor of the President. Hunt was simultaneously part of the White House staff and part of t is agency, as I presume you know.

Your interest may be limited to the $25,000. With regard to the other funds Barker got, the $89,000, checks for which were said to have been signed by the Mexican lawyer, Ogarrio, I have made inquiries of a dependable Mexican source. My source, in turn, checked with a repsected and dependable member of the Mexico City bar. His description of Ogarrio is other than my description of him. Translated, it becomes "clouded". As soon as Ogarrio's name became known, there was the immediate leaking of false tips about sugar-interest involvement in the funding, now known to be false. But one paper alone had at least two experienced people checking this bum steer, which kept them away from reality. Meanwhile, Ogarrio's alleged denial of knowing Hunt, made through his son Alejandro, was so phrased as to be less than a denial. When the semantics are studied, it is limited to the period of Hunt's White House employment. Hunt was in Mexico with a CIA cover as State Department 1950-3. I have a tabulation of his biography as in various forms he has supplied it if this interests you. It was made by a friend from Who's Who and other listings I also have.

My purpose is not to intrude into your investigation but to offer any help I can. I regard this kind of ~~thing~~ as more than felony. It is, as I see it, deeply subversive in the genuine, not propaganda, sense. May your efforts be successful and as broad in scope as the law permits!

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg